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of open water and a rapid easterly drift of the ice. His difficulties were augmented by the near exhaustion of his food. The lives of the three men were saved, however, in Crown Prince Gustav Sea, a little north of Axel Heiberg Land, by the killing of a few bears. He pushed as rapidly as possible down toward Lancaster Sound in the hope of reaching a Dundee whaler, but as he found he could not get so far south, he crossed into Jones Sound, early in July. He passed the winter at Cape Sparbo, and as his ammunition was exhausted, game was obtained by bow and arrow, the lance, the knife and fishing line. Remaining in an underground refuge they had prepared till sunrise, this year, the three men started for the Greenland shores and reached Cook's winter camp at Annotok on April 15. Thence Cook moved far south to the Danish settlements, reaching Upernivik on May 21 last, and later he was able to take a Danish Government vessel for Copenhagen, where he arrived in September.

Doubts have been expressed, in some quarters, as to the authenticity of Dr. Cook's brief narrative, while, at the same time, his claims seem to have been accepted with implicit confidence in Denmark, where he has been received with great enthusiasm and the highest honours. It is hoped that recriminations, which can settle nothing, will cease, and that matters in dispute will be left to the adjudication of competent experts, who will pass upon the merits of the recorded observations and other testimony. It is understood that the Coast and Geodetic Survey has offered to act in this capacity.

The attainment of the North Pole, after the long quest of centuries, has naturally stimulated the most profound interest throughout the world. The effect upon Arctic exploration will doubtless be, it is gratifying to say, to center enterprise in that field upon more scientific investigations.

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## GEOGRAPHICAL RECORD.

### NORTH AMERICA.

SOIL SURVEY OF WISCONSIN.—The Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey and the College of Agriculture of the University of Wisconsin are soon to begin a co-operative soil survey of the state assisted by the Bureau of Soils of the United States Department of Agriculture. The last session of the legislature authorized the making of a soil survey and a soil map "to ascertain the character and fertility of the developed and undeveloped soils of the state, the extent and practicability of drainage of soil and wet lands and the means for conserving and increasing the fertility of the soils." The sum of \$10,000 was appropriated annually for this work for the next two years.

**SURVEY PARTIES IN ALASKA.**—Fourteen field parties of the U. S. Geological Survey have been at work in Alaska during the present season. They comprise 12 geologists, 7 topographers and 3 engineers. Two parties have been working in southeastern Alaska, one in the Copper River region, two in the Matanuska coal region, one in the eastern part of the Kenai Peninsula, two in the Iliamna Lake region, two in the Yukon-Tanana region, one in the Koyukuk and Chandalar districts, one in the Norton Bay region, and one in Seward Peninsula. These surveys and investigations have been carried on under the direction of Alfred H. Brooks.

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#### AFRICA.

**THE GREAT EARTHQUAKE AND ERUPTION ON MT. CAMEROON.**—Lieut. Boyd Alexander, well known through the scientific results of his recent two years journey in Africa, started in December last for the Gulf of Guinea Islands of São Thomé, Principé and Annobon, which he intended chiefly to study from a zoological point of view. He remained three months in Principé and then crossed over to Victoria in the Cameroons for the purpose of ascending Mt. Cameroon and comparing its fauna with that of the island. *The Geographical Journal* (July) prints a letter from him, written at Buea, on the mountain side, which especially relates to the great earthquake and the eruption of the volcano while he was high on the slope. Up to the time of the earthquake he had made an interesting collection of birds, chiefly from the forest.

On the night of April 26 he was sitting in his tent, at an altitude of about 6,500 feet, in the dense forest, when he felt a slight trembling of the ground, and less than two minutes later the mountain side was shaken by a terrible shock. The shocks were repeated at intervals of five to six minutes and during the night over 100 were felt. They were each preceded by terrific booms from the hills above the camp. Forest trees kept crashing and the cries of the terrified monkeys added to the confusion. He remained till 3 A. M., hoping that the disturbance would cease, but as the shocks only grew worse he abandoned the camp and with his men made a night march in the drenching rain to Buea.

An hour after he left camp it was buried under the stone that fell down the mountain side. At Buea he found that all the white men had gone to Duala. Old natives told him that, 36 years ago, there was a similar disturbance and that the lava stream took the same course to the northeast as on the present occasion.

On May 7 he returned from an inspection of the two burning craters, which, he says, were a wonderful sight. They are situated in the northeast part of the mountain and not far from its eastern edge. As the crow flies, he estimated that these craters are about seven and a half miles from Buea. He got within 200 yards of the larger crater, the diameter of whose top he estimates at 60 yards. Ashes fell on his clothes, several stones came perilously near him and the detonations were terrific. Great volumes of smoke, blue and black as ink, towered into the sky and were lit by flame, and enormous fragments of rock were shot into the air. The smaller crater, not more than 30 yards to the east of the large one, was in process of formation and far more terrible. Sheets of flame accompanied by showers of red hot stones were emitted rapidly and followed by appalling roars. The lava stream, about 3 feet 4 inches thick and 70 yards wide, had made its way down a wide valley and was still smoking. The desolation in the course of the lava stream was complete. Everything had been burned and trunks of trees

stood out like twisted iron. On the night of April 28 and for two nights after the whole northeastern sky was lit up, and as this phenomenon recurred on the night of May 7 he inferred that this glow came from the stream of lava just released from the second crater. Many of the natives accused him of being the cause of these convulsions.

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#### EUROPE.

POPULATION OF FRANCE.—The *Official Journal*, reporting the statistics of population of France for the year 1908, gives a more encouraging view of the situation than has appeared for years past. The figures for 1908 show that 315,928 marriages occurred in that year, the average for the ten previous years having been 299,885. The number of births was 825,423, being an excess of births over deaths of 46,441. The average excess of births over deaths for the ten preceding years was 40,550. The number of deaths was the smallest in eleven years, while in births there was a recovery from the minimum of 1907 and marriages were 5 per cent. greater than the average for the ten earlier years.

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#### POLAR.

SUPPLIES FOR PEARY.—The schooner *Jeanie*, 88 tons, sailed from St. John's on August 3 with 50 tons of coal and the same amount of stores, which are to be landed at Etah, Greenland, to supplement the supplies of Commander Peary. If the explorer has carried out his proposed journey to the North Pole he is likely to be on the way home; if not, the additional supplies may be of much importance to him in a renewed attempt to reach the Pole which he may contemplate for the next sledging season. The *Jeanie* will return after landing her cargo bringing despatches which Peary may have sent or left for her.

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NANSEN'S NORTHERN CRUISE.—The London *Times* reports that Dr. Nansen has left Norway on a small private yacht for a cruise in northern waters. The cruise will not be completed till the end of autumn and will cover the Norwegian Sea toward Iceland and may possibly be continued to Greenland. Nansen's purpose is to continue his studies of sea currents and temperatures, which have an important bearing on questions of the fisheries and climate of Norway.

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ANNEXING A BIT OF THE ANTARCTIC.—The *Scottish Geographical Magazine* (Aug., 1909) says that the British government has declared South Georgia, the South Orkneys, South Shetland, the South Sandwich Islands and Graham Land in West Antarctica to be dependencies of the Falkland Islands and under the jurisdiction of the governor of those islands. South Georgia has been a dependency of the Falklands since 1775, having been annexed by Great Britain in that year. The South Shetlands, however, were at one time claimed by Argentina, and the same country is using the South Orkneys for the meteorological observatory which it took over from the *Scotia* expedition and still maintains. The South Sandwich group is still unexplored, though it has been visited by sealing vessels. This annexation of part of the Antarctic regions is the first attempt to lay serious claim to South Polar lands. The Antarctic area has been a No-Man's Land. The annexation is doubtless due to the fact that these waters are now visited by a con-

siderable number of whalers and an active revival of the whaling industry is in progress there. The latest letter received from Dr. Charcot, leader of the French South Polar Expedition (*Bull.*, June, 1909, p. 386), written at Deception Island, South Shetland, on Dec. 24, last year, reported that this island had become an important center for whaling carried on by 200 Norwegians with 10 vessels. Norwegian and Argentine whalers are also obtaining many thousands of barrels of oil every year from the new whaleries at South Georgia. Another whaling station has been established at New Island, a bit of land in the Falkland group. Hereafter a whaler must pay for an annual license at the Falkland Islands before he will be allowed to fish in these wide-spread waters or to make use of the island harbours.

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#### CLIMATOLOGY.

NORMAL TEMPERATURE AND PRECIPITATION OF THE UNITED STATES.—In *Bulletin R* of the Weather Bureau, Professor F. H. Bigelow has given the normals of the daily temperature and the daily precipitation for a large number of Weather Bureau stations. The temperature normals were obtained by plotting on a large sheet the monthly normals, drawing a curve through the twelve points representing the months, and then scaling off the temperature for each day. The monthly means were then taken from these values, and in case of any discrepancy between these monthly means and the original monthly normals the curve was slightly readjusted, so that the two monthly means should be in very close agreement. The daily normal temperatures for the several stations, obtained in this way, are given to the nearest degree.

The daily normals of precipitation were obtained as follows. All available records for each day in the year were collected for each station, the means obtained, and the results plotted. These curves were usually rough, consisting of broken lines. In order to approximate closely to the daily normal values which would be derived from a very long series of observations, the mean values of successive eleven dates were used as the means for the different days. For example, the January 1-11 mean was entered as the mean for January 6; the January 2-12 mean was entered as the mean for January 7, etc. Thus the normal values for each day in the year were obtained. This, it will be noted, being a process of rather extreme "smoothing," tends to spread the excessive values of individual dates backward and forward through ten dates on each side of their occurrence. The records of short periods were corrected by reference to adjacent stations having records of longer period.

The tables published in *Bulletin R* are now in use in the climatological work of the Weather Bureau throughout the United States. R. DEC. W.

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NO CHANGE OF CLIMATE IN EGYPT.—The question of possible changes of climate in Egypt, during recent years, was discussed by Mr. B. F. E. Keeling, in a recent number of the *Cairo Scientific Journal*, and a summary of Mr. Keeling's paper was printed in *Nature*, May 13, 1909. The mean temperatures at Abbassia during the period 1870-1908 show no differences which are greater than those likely to be caused by differences in the exposure of the thermometers. Humidity, also, gives "very little evidence of any decided change during the last forty years." The same is true of rainfall. R. DEC. W.

## PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY.

**SAND-BLASTING IN THE COLORADO DESERT.**—Sand-blasting in arid regions is a well-known geological process. Sometimes this interesting action of wind-blown sand becomes of immediate economic importance to man. Thus, in the Colorado Desert, the telegraph poles of the Southern Pacific Railway are worn away near the ground, and have to be protected by posts or piles of rock. The more resistant knots or rings of growth are brought into relief by the etching of the softer parts of the wood. The fish-plates and bolts of the railway tracks are eroded rapidly, and tin cans strewn along the tracks are kept bright and polished by the driving sand, and are quickly etched through, as by acid, and worn away. In *Water Supply Paper* No. 225, of the U. S. Geological Survey, from which the foregoing facts are taken, there is a picture of a telegraph pole near Palm Springs Station, which shows the deep cutting by the wind-blown sand, and the pile of rocks put up to save the pole from being cut through. R. DEC. W.

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**THE MAGNETIC SURVEY YACHT CARNEGIE.**—This new vessel, built for the magnetic survey work of the Carnegie Institution, was launched at the shipyard of the Tebo Yacht Basin Company, Brooklyn, on June 12. Dr. L. A. Bauer, Director of the Department of Terrestrial Magnetism, has sent to the Society an illustrated pamphlet dealing with the construction of the new boat, her object and her work. The yacht is practically non-magnetic. There are no magnetic materials in the vessel excepting the cast-iron pistons in the cylinders of the internal combustion engine and the steel cams required for operating the valves. As the *Bulletin* has already announced, the Department of Terrestrial Magnetism of the Carnegie Institution is undertaking to carry out a magnetic survey of the earth in about 15 years, and, in connection with this project, the magnetic survey of the oceans has been assigned to the new yacht. This work will be done under the direction of Dr. L. A. Bauer, the head of the Department, and he will be represented on the *Carnegie*, as chief of the party, by Mr. W. J. Peters, formerly of the U. S. Geological Survey, who gained great experience in such ocean surveying when in command of the magnetic survey yacht *Galilee* in 1906-8. As has been reported in these pages, the *Galilee* has made a general magnetic survey of the Pacific Ocean, the length of her cruises amounting to 60,000 nautical miles. The *Carnegie* will begin her work in Hudson Bay, and is expected to make a magnetic survey of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans and to complete that of the Pacific.

The *Carnegie* left New York early in August for a cruise of six or seven months in Hudson Bay and the North Atlantic, returning via Madeira and Bermuda. The vessel is in command of Mr. Peters, with Captain C. E. Littlefield as sailing master; Dr. C. C. Craft, surgeon and observer; Messrs. J. T. Ault, E. Kidson and R. R. Tafel, magnetic observers, and F. D. Smith, observer-engineer. The crew consists of 2 watch officers, 8 seamen and 2 cooks.

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## ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY.

**THE NATURE OF COMMERCIAL OR ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY.**—Avard Longley Bishop, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of the Science of Society in Yale University, has a paper with this title in the *Yale Review* (May, 1909). In his opinion, the present text-books on this subject are too comprehensive and in many cases are overloaded with meaningless statistical data. The latter criticism is undoubtedly

valid. His suggestion, however, that the minor countries and products should be eliminated from the text-books or only incidentally mentioned, is probably too sweeping. Some of the minor regions largely monopolize the production of commodities well worth knowing; and the practical study of economic geography is nowhere more intensive to-day than in wide areas of the newer lands of which the white races had little or no knowledge a few years ago. His suggestion that the influence of physiographic factors upon man and the geographic and human controls over the production, transportation and marketing of commercial products should have more prominent attention in the text-books will doubtless be approved by the best teachers. Dr. Bishop's paper is a suggestive and valuable contribution to this important department of geographical study.

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#### VARIOUS.

NEW FEATURES OF PETERMANN'S MITTEILUNGEN.—In its August number *Petermann's Mitteilungen*, under the new editorship of Prof. Paul Langhans, has greatly enlarged its monthly report of geographical news, which fills six pages of small type. It includes many personal and obituary notes, reports on honors awarded, reports on congresses and the proceedings of geographical and allied societies, and summaries of geographical exploration in progress in all parts of the world. Two new departments have been introduced—(a) a classified list of new geographical works, critical notices of them being reserved for the *Literaturbericht*, and (b) reports on the progress of cartography and the most conspicuous new maps, which introduce the monthly list of new maps, now in its second year of publication. Circulars have been sent to geographers in all parts of the world requesting them to supply the new departments with the latest information.

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HONOURS CONFERRED.—At the recent anniversary meeting of the Royal Geographical Society, the Victoria Research Medal was awarded to Professor Alexander Agassiz for his achievements in oceanographical research; the Founder's Medal to Dr. Stein for the results of his second journey in Chinese Turkestan; the Patron's Medal to Colonel Talbot of the Royal Engineers for his mapping of extensive areas in Asia, Egypt and the Sudan; the Murchison Award to Captain Rawling for his surveys in western Tibet; the Gill Memorial to Commander Whitehouse, Royal Navy, for his successful completion of the triangulated survey of Victoria Nyanza; the Cuthbert Peak Grant to Captain Ommanney, Royal Engineers, for his determinations of longitudes in Northern Nigeria; and the Back Grant to Rai Sahib Lal Singh, the Indian surveyor who accompanied Dr. Stein on his latest expedition.

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APPROPRIATIONS FOR SCIENCE.—The Paris Academy of Sciences, through its committee, has appointed 4,000 francs of the Bonaparte fund to enable M. Cayeux to pursue his researches on the fossils of the oolitic iron deposits in the U. S.; and 4,000 francs to M. Chevalier, to help him carry on his geographical and ethnographical researches in the French colonies of tropical Africa.

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NATIONAL MUSEUM OF MEXICO.—The old Museo Nacional of Mexico was, in February last, divided by the government into two independent institutions—the Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnología and the Museo Nacional

de Historia Natural. The first number of the *Anales* of the National Museum of Archæology, History and Ethnology, which appeared in May, follows the general plan of the *Anales* of the old Museum excepting that the various branches of natural history are not treated in its pages.

#### OBITUARY.

E. DELMAR MORGAN.—This geographer, traveller and Russian scholar died in London on May 18 at the age of 69. He had travelled extensively in Asia, Africa, and Russia, translated into English Prjevalsky's "Travels in Mongolia and Northern Tibet," edited a number of important geographical works, and was for years a member of the Council of the Royal Geographical Society and a frequent contributor to its publications.

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MAJOR CECIL MURPHY, R.A.—Major Murphy died on April 16 in London. He was the last surviving member of the Cameron expedition to Africa and accompanied the remains of Dr. Livingstone when they were taken from the place of his death to the east coast of Africa.

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MADAME SIGNE RINK.—The widow of the well known Danish geologist and authority on Greenland died at Christiania on April 19, aged 73. Born in Fredrikshaab, Greenland, where her father was overseer of the Danish Colony, her thorough acquaintance with the natives made her a valuable assistant to her husband in his scientific work. She was the author of several Greenland novels, wrote on the Greenland natives and, after her husband's death, revised his scientific manuscripts for publication.

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TH. MELLARD READE.—This geologist died in Liverpool on May 26, aged 77. He was president, at various times, of the Liverpool Geological Society. His most important works were: "The Origin of Mountain Ranges" (1886) and "The Evolution of the Earth's Structure" (1903).

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PROF. DR. ERNST VON HALLE.—This German geographer died in Berlin on June 28, aged 41 years. He travelled extensively in North and Central America. His best known writings are "Amerika, seine bedeutung für die Weltwirtschaft" (1905), "Die grossen Epochen der Kolonialgeschichte" (1907) and "Die Weltwirtschaft" (since 1906).

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F. B. JOHNSON.—Died in Uganda in June aged 39. Missionary and explorer. He was the first European to travel completely around the Ruwenzori mountain group and wrote "Tramps around the Mountains of the Moon."

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PROF. DR. VITT. RAFF. MATTEUCCI.—Died on July 15, aged 48 years. He was internationally known as the Director of the Observatory of Vesuvius and was also a member of the geological staff of the University of Naples.